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## U.S. Is Vulnerable to Terror Attack, CIA Chief Warns

By RALPH VARTABEDIAN TIMES STAFF WRITER

W ASHINGTON—Director of Central Intelligence John M. Deutch said Thursday that the federal government is poorly organized and inadequately equipped to handle a nuclear, chemical or biological attack by terrorists on U.S. soil.

Deutch said the United States is facing a quickly increasing threat, which he characterized as "the most urgent challenge facing national security." He said the risk of a chemical or biological attack by terrorists is greater than a nuclear attack.

"We are not well organized to deal with these problems," Deutch said at a conference sponsored by Harvard University and the Los Alamos National Laboratory.

Ever since a religious cult, Aum Supreme Truth, was blamed for dispersing nerve gas inside the Tokyo subway system last October, an attack that killed 12 people, U.S. authorities have sharply elevated their assessment of American vulnerability.

The Tokyo gas attack appeared to demonstrate that a relatively little known group could obtain the funding and expertise to develop sophisticated lethal weapons. The incident, along with the bombings at New York's World Trade Center and the Oklahoma City federal building, also demonstrated that terrorists can commit acts of unbounded destruction, experts said Thursday.

Authorities from the Energy, Justice and Defense departments, as well as Congress, acknowledged Thursday that programs to combat potential biological and chemical attacks are substantially underfunded, leaving the United States

relatively vulnerable to a major catastrophe.

Navy Undersecretary Richard Danzig estimated that a single biological attack, involving a disease such as anthrax, could put hundreds of thousands or even millions of Americans at risk.

"We are remarkably underinvested in this area given the threat," Danzig said.

Sen. Richard G. Lugar (R-Ind.) outlined legislation that he and Sen. Sam Nunn (D-Ga.) will introduce in coming weeks that would pave the way for a large-scale coordinated federal program to respond to the problem.

"In my view, the potential costs of ignoring the threats and problems associated with the spread of weapons of mass destruction are so enormous that they demand a national mission on a par with the Manhattan Project," which built the atomic bomb during World War II, Lugar said.

Inder Lugar's plan, massive federal resources would be devoted to development of entirely new technologies. The legislation would create a national coordinator for the program, reporting to the National Security Council.

Graham T. Allison, a Harvard professor who has just written a book. "Avoiding Nuclear Anarchy." and who helped organize the conference, estimated that the United States is currently spending about \$400 million on counter-proliferation technology and training.

But Allison said the risks facing the American public are rising so rapidly that the federal government should be spending \$4 billion on the problem—based on the assessment by Deutch and others that this represents a top national security risk.